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EDUCATION UNDER RELIGIOUS AUSPICES

This statement was prepared some months ago at the request of the United States Bureau of Education for the Biennial report. As the war has caused a considerable delay in issuing that publication, it seems advisable to present this survey at once in our Bulletin. B. W. BROWN.

The lack of proportion in our present aggregate of church institutions points significantly to the fact that their development was genetic rather than logical. Christian colleges existed before state institutions were founded; indeed, some state universities were originally under denominational control. We have inherited, therefore, a curious alternation of church and state control in higher education. Religious schools were strongly intrenched before any system of common or secondary education had been devised, so that the church system is very highly developed at the top, but depends mainly on the state for primary and secondary training. Again, various denominations, each acting independently, founded and endowed schools, taking into account mainly their local and denominational situations, but without considering the relation of school to school, or of one church organization to another. The result has been an over-supply of church institutions in some parts of the country and inadequate facilities elsewhere. Out of these conditions is growing at the present time a new consciousness of the relationship of one religious body to another in the educational field, of the higher to the lower grades of religious instruction, and of the combined church activities to the public school system. This awakening is the most encouraging sign of progress in the whole educational field today. It is not a disparagement of the past. The traditions of Christian education in this country are the object of intense gratitude and pride. This new consciousness is a part of the growing "time-spirit" in which we are seeing things in larger units and closer relationships.

EXTENT OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM.

Out of a total of 103,000,000 people, there are in the country 40,-515,126 communicants or members of some religious order. As only 143,000 are members of Jewish bodies, practically all of these are in Christian organizations—some 15,000,000 Catholic and the remainder Protestant. Church population is usually estimated at more than twice

the membership, so that this may be regarded as essentially a Christian country in which the religious forces are proportionately very great.

Institutions.

The educational system controlled by these forces is roughly as follows: 195,276 Sunday Schools, with 19,951,675 pupils; 1,500,000 students in private elementary schools (90% Catholic); 1,586 high schools or academies, with 103,829 students (55% Catholics); 41 junior colleges; 395 4-year colleges and universities, with a total attendance in 1916-1917 of approximately 120,000 students, and 164 schools of theology.

However, Church interests in education are by no means as coherently related as might be inferred from the above educational stages. There is comparatively little connection between the higher and lower branches of this system. Up to the present time, the Sunday school has had only a slight relation to the church preparatory school, or college, or seminary. This gap is the more marked as the Catholics and Lutherans have very nearly a monopoly of the week-day religious or parochial schools for children, but, on the other hand, have relatively small interests in the field of higher education. While the Catholic Church is credited with some 62 colleges, in state universities only one in ten students reporting church membership is a Catholic. The same break in the system is evident in that many Protestant denominations have large holdings in the field of higher education, but practically no week-day schools of secondary and primary grade. It is apparent, therefore, that our religious education is dependent on the public school system for any connected or logical sequence of instruction.

In addition to these definite grades of instruction there are a large number of miscellaneous institutions conducted partly by boards of education and in part by mission boards. The activities of ten denominations alone out of the Protestant group include 13 training schools; 11 seminaries (ungraded) for women; 107 orphanages with grade school instruction; 61 schools for Negroes; 3 for Indians, and a score of other miscellaneous institutions. To these should be added, also, the "mountain white" schools conducted by the churches and the night schools for immigrants under the Y. M. C. A.

Co-operation with Public Schools.

As church institutions by no means cover the educational field, there has been a growing disposition to provide religious instruction for the youth of the church attending state institutions. It is an acknowledged fact that more students of leading denominations go to the state universities than to the church schools. It has been further demonstrated this year that between 70 and 75% of the students now in state universities are members of some church. Obviously, the churches having shut out religious instruction by law are under obligation to supply this instruction independently. This situation is being provided for along three definite lines. First, the Christian Associations have paid secre-

tarries in nearly every state institution, with a membership averaging about 40% of the student body. Secondly; the various denominations are placing religious workers at state institutions as fast as their funds will permit. The Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational, and Baptist denominations, which have the largest proportion of students in state institutions, spent \$57,000 last year along this line. A third activity is found in the Bible chair, or school of religion. Universities, as in Missouri, North Dakota, and Texas, are more and more disposed to grant credit for instruction in religious subjects by outside agencies when the work is of especially high grade, under proper supervision, and non-sectarian. Several denominations are beginning to secure endowment funds for instruction of this character. At present, however, the religious approach to state institutions is somewhat experimental and the ideal of a religious center not yet realized. The Catholics now maintain chapels, the Episcopalians church clubs; the Disciples and Methodists Bible chairs, and the Presbyterians religious workers.

Movements are under way, also, to co-operate with the public school system in the field of secondary education. The development of a graded system with teacher training in the Sabbath schools, and particularly the framing by agreement among the denominations of satisfactory courses in the materials of religion, has made possible the crediting of this work in the high school curriculum. This plan in various forms has been tried with considerable success, especially in North Dakota, Colorado, and the State of New York.

A further attempt to correlate church and state education is the promotion of week-day religious instruction. The most interesting efforts of this sort to make church schools somewhat more systematic than is possible in the Sabbath schools, adjusting the hours and program to the schedule of the public schools, are found in Malden, Massachusetts, and Gary, Indiana. A movement similar in effect is the daily vacation Bible school project, which has developed extensively during the past two years. The usual course is a daily session covering five weeks. During 1917 there were 600 schools in 97 centers, with an attendance of 64,000 pupils, in addition to separate schools conducted by the Presbyterian denomination alone. This organization has been somewhat stronger in 1918 and in some localities the Presbyterian and International Association have joined forces.

Co-ordinating Agencies.

For the most part, church interests in education have grown spontaneously rather than through outside control and supervision. During the last few years, there has been a steady trend towards centralization. Twenty of the leading denominations now have definite boards of education and others are considering closer organization. Many of these boards are highly systematized and exert a powerful influence for education in their constituency. The combined budgets for 1918 amounted to a million and a half dollars. Recognizing the fundamental unity of their

interests, these boards in 1911 united in a Council of Church Boards of Education. In 1914, the Council organized the Association of American Colleges, which now numbers 230 standard institutions. Several denominations also have separate associations of their own colleges. The Council of Church Boards, working in conjunction with the Association of American Colleges, the Christian Associations, the organization of Church Workers in State Institutions, the Religious Education Association, the International Sunday School Association, and the Commission on Christian Education of the Federal Council of Churches, is now in a position to co-ordinate more fully the large educational interests of Protestant bodies. It is, of course, recognized that the Catholic interests have long since been highly organized.

HIGHER EDUCATION.

Professional Training.

Although some universities under denominational control have many professional departments, the Church makes no claim to the field of technical professional education other than for the ministry and missions. In this field it has a virtual monopoly. Replacing the present ministry and providing for reasonable growth calls for the addition of at least 4,500 ministers each year. To train this number of recruits there were in 1915 164 theological schools offering as a rule 3-year courses. (Catholic schools cover 6 years.) Of this number some 86 Protestant seminaries maintain a reasonable standard of professional education, the remaining Protestant schools offering work of somewhat lower grade for foreign speaking candidates. Sixty-seven seminaries of eight leading denominations have total assets, including plant and endowment, of \$31,295,000, or about one-half of the total assets of all the seminaries in the field. Correspondence schools and summer institutes, especially in the south, provide a partial substitute for seminary training. There has also been a marked increase in the loan funds at the disposal of seminaries and boards of education to assist needy students. However, the number of students graduated by all theological schools approximate only 2,500 per year, or about one-half the annual demand. The remainder must be supplied from students who fail to complete the seminary course or enter the ministry directly from college. The problem of securing professional religious workers is consequently a problem of increasing attendance at the seminaries. Just at this point the war has greatly complicated the situation by cutting down seminary attendance 12% during the past year and in particular reducing the number in the entering classes. Losses during the coming year will be even heavier. With all due allowance for consolidation of churches and a larger average congregation per minister, the reduction of the number of trained leaders at a time when the supply is only 50% adequate, constitutes a serious menace to the future strength of the ministry.

The question of the proper content of theological instruction has also been greatly complicated by the war. During the last few years

there has been a uniform demand among all churches for a highly trained ministry and the standards of ordination in the various communions have been steadily raised. There is no disposition at present to lower standards but the desire is widespread to make theological training respond more directly to the essential needs of the time. Two important conferences on this subject were held during the year, the former including representatives of all Baptist seminaries and the latter a more general conference called in August, 1918, by Harvard University.

Liberal Arts Colleges.

At the present time the field of Liberal Arts is evenly divided between church and private institutions on the one hand and state institutions on the other. The former have a larger attendance and a greater number of schools, while the latter are growing more rapidly. At present there are affiliated with the various church boards of education 333 colleges and universities, 41 recognized junior colleges, and 28 other colleges for Negroes. The total assets of these schools, together with Catholic institutions, are in excess of half a billion dollars and their combined income more than twenty-five million dollars per year. During the last four years their gifts for plant and endowment have averaged almost thirty million dollars per year. By far the largest educational interests are controlled by the Presbyterian U. S. A. Church, with 64 colleges, the Methodist Episcopal Church with 44 colleges, the Baptists with 22 in the North and 38 in the South, and the Congregational Churches with 41 colleges and universities, including those historically related to the denomination. The total attendance of these, together with 62 Catholic colleges, was 120,000 students in 1915, as compared with 83,000 Liberal Arts students in 93 state institutions for the corresponding year. The effect of the war, however, has been to reduce college attendance on the average 18 to 20% below the total for 1916-1917. This reduction the state and private institutions have suffered equally. The loss in the beginning classes, however, was somewhat heavier in church than in state institutions. Thus far it has not been necessary to close the doors of any church colleges on account of the war, although some ten or twelve preparatory schools have been discontinued. By the utmost economy, coupled with unusual exertions in the raising of emergency funds, colleges have been able to live practically within their incomes and to close the year 1917-1918 with relatively small deficits. This, however, is an achievement which could hardly be duplicated after another year of the war.

RECENT PROGRESS.

Standardization.

The tendency in recent years to define sharply the different grades of education and to standardize institutions has been shared by the various church authorities in education. At the present time the three main branches of the Presbyterian Church, the two Methodist bodies,

the United Brethren, and some of the smaller denominations have definite requirements in grading their schools. In particular, the Methodist Church, South, has greatly cleared the situation in its territory by sharply defining and classifying junior colleges. The Association of American Colleges has taken the lead in formulating the specifications of an efficient college and is now defining college efficiency on the financial side. The Religious Education Association with the co-operation of the Council of Church Boards, classified the Bible departments in all of the higher institutions with a view to improving the standard, and the Council of Church Boards has further promoted conferences for standardizing the Biblical instruction within those departments.

Financial Campaigns.

It became evident some years ago that to realize the standards defined, larger endowments and incomes were indispensable. The last three years have therefore seen a remarkable group of campaigns among different denominations to promote their educational resources. The denominations of these boards affiliated with the Council have been in the field for an aggregate of \$100,000,000. Of this amount the Disciples have raised 3½ millions; the Baptist North 15 millions, and an additional million for war emergency purposes. The Presbyterian U. S. A. have been in the field for 36 million; the Presbyterian U. S. 6 million; the United Presbyterian 1½ million, the Reformed Church 1¼ million, and the Baptist South 10 million. The most notable campaign has been handled by the Methodist Episcopal Church in securing by July 4, 1918, a Jubilee Fund of \$27,000,000.

Even greater efforts are now being projected for the immediate future. The Southern Baptist denomination has blocked out a campaign for 15 million dollars during the next five years; the Southern Methodist Church is committed to an educational campaign for 13 million dollars for colleges and 10 million additional for its two universities. The Presbyterian Church U. S. A. is projecting plans for campaigns totalling almost 75 million dollars, in which education will have a large share. A similar movement is under way in the Presbyterian Church U. S. It is therefore evident that church standards of education so far as they can be attained through financial strength are in a fair way to be realized and we are passing out of the period in which a denominational school, because it is small, is to be reproached with inadequate facilities for a well rounded education.

War Service.

During the past year the colleges with all they possessed were absolutely at the disposal of the government. Students were encouraged and even urged to enlist. Some 45,000 college students left school almost immediately and more than 1,000 faculty men, including a score of college presidents, entered war service of some sort. College incomes were reduced more than two million dollars through loss in tuition and institutional costs increased an equal amount through rise in prices.

In so far as they could secure military instructors, the Christian colleges introduced military training, and during the fall a complete system has been in operation. The larger institutions have been active in scientific research connected with the war and all have rendered valuable service in campaign for the Red Cross, Y. M. C. A., Liberty Loans, recruiting, and to an even greater extent in interpreting the spiritual meaning of the struggle. On the other hand all educational leaders have recognized fully that the channels of trained leadership for the future must not be completely blocked and efforts have been redoubled to maintain the essential lines of education. The plan adopted of using the colleges as an integral part of the military machine for instructing officers insures the maximum of war service, coupled with the normal maintenance of our higher educational system.

Co-operation.

The most significant tendency of the year, greatly stimulated by the war, has been the increasing co-operation of all the interests in the field of religious education. Within particular denominations there is a definite tightening of the bonds uniting educational institutions. During the year the Episcopal Board has strengthened its college department; the Presbyterian Church U. S. A. is consolidating its various educational interests under a single board; the Methodist Church South is expanding the work of its board of education and organizing its colleges in an association, and the Reformed Church in America is projecting a survey of its educational interests. (The relation of the colleges to the denominations is various. In fact, there is no definite line of demarcation between the church schools and independent institutions such as Harvard and Yale, which were historically under the church. The Baptist and Congregational denominations encourage institutional independence; the Presbyterians favor strong denominational control.)

The extent of interdenominational cooperation may be estimated from the activities in which the various churches have joined forces. At the present time colleges of most of the Protestant denominations, together with many Catholic schools, are combining much of their advertising under the leadership of the Council of Church Boards of Education, various state associations of colleges, and state councils of defense, and the American Council on Education, which conducted an emergency campaign from Washington during the summer of 1918. The various church boards of education have combined their educational survey work and investigation in a single department. A new publication, the American College Bulletin, now serves as a medium of contact between interests in this field and has already completed a successful year. A considerable venture in cooperative purchasing has also been developed by the Association of American Colleges. The same organization has secured scholarships for some 220 French girls distributed among American colleges. The American College Bureau, a co-operative agency for securing teachers, is in operation. In short, all the agencies of this

field are working together in a way never before deemed possible.

These and other cooperative activities have been furthered by a number of important educational conferences during the year. The Council of Church Boards of Education, the Christian Associations, and the Church Workers in State Universities, held a joint meeting at the beginning of the year, at which the religious work in state institutions was especially considered. The same organizations united in a nationwide campaign to accomplish the Northfield program of 200,000 college students in Bible study during the year. There have been special gatherings of those interested in college Bible departments, standards of Sunday school work, cooperative purchasing, preparation for the ministry, and the relation of the college to the war. Indeed, it is safe to say that there has been more impetus toward close educational co-operation among different religious bodies during the past two years than in the entire previous generation.

The Function of Church Education.

The drawing together of the educational programs of religious bodies formerly independent naturally raises the question of the extent to which they hold a similar conception of their educational responsibilities. The educational activities of the churches seem to agree fundamentally on the following principles:

1. Religion is necessary to a complete education. As religious instruction is legally excluded from public schools, Christian institutions of learning and facilities for religious training at state institutions are necessary to supplement the public system.

2. Education is necessary to the achievement of the Christian program by providing

- a. trained church leaders
- b. denominational centers of influence.
- c. educational facilities where the public schools do not reach
- d. conservative influence on secular education

It is not probable that any religious denomination would take exception to the general substance of these principles. Indeed, there is a very strong tendency on the part of the leaders in secular education to endorse them without qualification. It is generally recognized that church schools have contributed to our total system of education a moral tone which would have been impossible under purely secular control. There is less disposition than ever before to bring about a mere duplication of educational facilities as between church and state and on the other hand a far stronger tendency to secure from each type its highest contribution to the nation. Undoubtedly, means must be found by which greater continuity of religious and moral instruction from the lower to the higher stages of the educational system may be secured. However, the cordial relations among church bodies and between church and public education provide a much easier approach to that problem than has been possible for many years.